



CREDIT HOUR POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The United States Department of Education requires that each institution develop a written credit hour policy that confirms to the definition of a credit hour as defined in the Federal Register (34 CFR 600.2 [for purposes of Federal programs and provisions related to accrediting agencies' assessment of institutions' determinations of credit hours or other measure of student work] and 602.24(f) [for the purposes of title IV financial assistance programs]).
- 1.2 The Higher Learning Commission requires submission of Federal Compliance documentation through annual institutional updates and as a part of the comprehensive evaluation process.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all for-credit courses and to all developmental education courses.

3. POLICY STATEMENT:

- 3.1 The policy of Oklahoma State University – Oklahoma City requires adherence to the standards established by the Oklahoma state Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) with regard to the semester-credit-hour.

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

- 3.2 As per Chapter 3.19.3 of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, to ensure that academic standards are maintained for both out-of-class preparation and instructional contact hours, OSRHE adopted the following definition of a semester credit hour:
 - 3.2.1 "One semester-credit-hour is normally awarded for completion of a course meeting for 800 instructional minutes (for example, 50 minutes per week for 16 weeks) exclusive of enrollment, orientation, and scheduled breaks. Organized examination days may be counted."

Federal Definition of the Credit Hour

- 3.3 Federal Definition of the Credit Hour: "...a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:
 - 3.3.1 One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or,
 - 3.3.2 At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practice, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours."
- 3.4 It is important to note that there is no requirement that a credit hour *exactly* duplicate the amount of work in paragraph (1) as is highlighted in the provisions of paragraph (2). The requirement is that a credit hour *reasonably approximate* that minimum amount of work in paragraph (1).

Higher Learning Commission

- 3.5 Higher Learning Commission Policy Number FDCR.A.10.020, Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition was created for the intent "(1) to review the institution's policies regarding the award of credit in relation to the types of courses, disciplines, programs, credential levels and formats offered, regardless of modality; (2) to

- determine whether the institution follows those policies in practice; and (3) to review the institution's process for verifying length of academic period and compliance with credit hour requirements through course scheduling.
- 3.6 Institutions should assign and award credit in such a way to confirm to commonly accepted practices in higher education.
- 3.7 Institutions "seeking, or participating in, Title IV federal financial aid shall demonstrate that they have policies determining the credit hours awarded to courses and programs in keeping with commonly-accepted practices and with the federal definition of the credit hour..., and that institutions also have procedures that result in an appropriate awarding of institutional credit in conformity with the policies established by the institution."
- 3.8 "The Commission shall review the assignment of credit hours, program length, and tuition in conjunction with a comprehensive evaluation for reaffirmation of accreditation during the Commission's assurance process."

4. PROCEDURE

- 4.1 As the standard unit of credit to be used in evaluating a student's educational attainment and progress, the semester-credit-hour will be calculated as follows:
- 4.1.1 Regular Classes: One semester-hour of credit will normally be awarded for a class meeting one hour (50 minutes) per week for 16 weeks (800 instructional minutes), including organized examination days but exclusive of enrollment, orientation, and scheduled breaks. Additionally, a minimum of two hours (100 minutes) of out-of-class preparation is expected for the typical student for each hour in class. Classes of greater than one semester-hour of credit will use this same ratio for each additional credit hour to be awarded.
- 4.1.2 Laboratories: Laboratory credit is normally awarded at a rate not to exceed one-half of the instructional rate. One semester-hour of credit is normally awarded for completion of a laboratory meeting a minimum of 1600 minutes (100 minutes per week for 16 weeks). Laboratories offered for multiple hours of credit will meet the minimum standards set for one-semester-credit of laboratory work times the number of semester-credit-hours to be awarded.
- 4.1.3 Class/Laboratory Combination: Instruction offered through a combination of class and laboratory meetings would normally observe the standards set forth in (4.1.1) and (4.1.2) above on a pro rata basis.
- 4.1.4 Clinical/Practicum: Clinical/Practicum credit is normally awarded at a rate not to exceed one-quarter of the instructional rate. One semester-hour of credit is normally awarded for completion of a clinical/practicum meeting a minimum of (3:1) 2400 minutes or a minimum of (4:1) 3200 minutes.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring, and review

- 5.1 This policy is the campus' affirmation that it complies with OSRHE, Department of Education, and Higher Learning Commission requirements.
- 5.1.1 The policy:
- 5.1.1.1 Aligns with relevant state, federal, and regional accrediting requirements;
- 5.1.1.2 Has been informally followed, but is being commemorated in the development of this campus policy;
- 5.1.1.3 Reflects on the adherence to the campus value of Stewardship in that it ensures credit hour assignments are appropriate and honor both the faculty member's time and the student's time and fiscal resources;
- 5.1.1.4 Is reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness and to ensure ongoing adherence to state, federal, and regional accrediting requirements.

Reporting

- 5.2 New courses are evaluated for appropriate semester credit hour calculations upon submission for approval.
- 5.3 Modified courses are evaluated for appropriate semester credit hour calculations upon each subsequent submission for approval.
- 5.4 New and modified courses and associated credit hour calculations are captured in Campus Curriculum Committee documents and minutes.
- 5.5 The Course Action Form is the official record of the semester credit hours awarded for each course and it's associated breakout between Lecture, Lab, and Clinical/Practicum.

Records Management

- 5.6 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy and procedure in a recognized University recordkeeping system.
- 5.7 All Course Action Forms are captured electronically and stored on the campus shared drive under the Curriculum Committee folder. This is the official archive of course actions, including semester credit hour determination.
- 5.8 The Office of Academic Affairs has oversight of and management of these records.

6. RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

- United States Department of Education: 34 CFR 600.2 and 602.24(f)
- Higher Learning Commission: Policy Number FDCR.A.10.020.

7. APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	
Administrator	Office of Academic Affairs
Next Review Date	September, 2022

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	
Amendment Authority and Date	
Notes	